

# **Town Center Committee**

## **Reston Master Plan Special Study Task Force**

*Report to the Task Force on the Current State  
of the Draft Committee Report*

Task Force Meeting  
July 27, 2010

# TC Committee Members

- Pete Otteni and Robert Goudie, Co-Chairs
- Bill Keefe
- Mark Looney
- Susan Mockenhaupt
- Rae Noritake
- Terri Phillips
- Joe Stowers
- Phil Tobey

# Committee Methodology: Collaborative Approach

- At every meeting, public and landowners at the table
  - Open Forum every meeting
  - Wide latitude to allow commentary even during meetings
  - Landowners not on Committee actively attended and participated
- County Staff across departments
  - RMAG
  - Parks Authority
  - Interdepartmental dialogue
  - Planning
- Others
  - MWAA
  - USGS

# Topics Not Addressed

- Infrastructure Needs Assessment
  - Necessary precondition
  - Not just TC but totality of TF's recommendations
  - Beyond Committee's scope
- Air Rights
  - Position: embed pylons now
  - Preserve future air rights – next evolution of TC
  - Discuss air rights vision for TC as air rights becomes economically feasible, not now

# Vision

- Overarching vision: TC Metro will be a dynamic, balanced, mixed use destination-origination station
- Key drivers will be extending urban core south to the Metro and incenting new residential

# Area Visions

- Metro North (parcels D3, 4, and 5)
  - Extension of the urban core south to Metro
  - Urban plaza with signature retail, dynamic nightlife, hotel with convention capacity, new office and residential
- Metro South (parcels E3, 4, and 5)
  - Rezone from suburban office park to new mixed use space; not an extension of urban core but own identity (think new village center with heavier commercial)
- TCN (Inova and County land units)
  - More urban with central focus on government uses, town green, and new residential with supporting retail

# Essential Framework to Implement the Vision

- Must have higher FARs (much of area already built out commercial so must incent to create mixed use)
- Value proposition: To achieve FARs beyond current zoning developers must provide:
  - Grid
  - Green
  - Distinctive Design
  - 1:1 SF residential:commercial balance

# 1. Grid/Connectivity

- Key is intra- and inter-parcel connectivity
  - Some land units a grid, others not
- “Complete streets”
  - Accommodate all modes of travel
  - Bike/ped separation
  - Improved crossings
  - Bike parking and sharing



## 2. Green – Open Space

- Plan from the outset; set goals
- Challenge in spaces already built out
  - Need additional discussion on how to incent/accommodate
- Central greens a focus augmented with:
  - Traffic calming
  - Pedestrian pathways through blocks
  - Land unit buffers as appropriate
  - Capitalize on storm water ponds
  - Innovative uses of building rooftops

# 3. Distinctive Design

- Keep TC leading edge
- Strong message for the design review mechanism

## 4. 1:1 for Higher FARs

- What is “healthy,” mixed use TOD (“healthy” meaning dynamic space but also traffic mitigation)?
- GMU cites Ballston as model:
  - 4:1 jobs:households
  - 1:1 SF residential:office
  - See also Crystal City (moving to 1:1 SF res:office)
- TC area currently more heavily commercial
  - Partly organic
  - Partly because residential in RCIG prohibited
- Comp Plan currently – 40:60 SF res:non-res

# 1:1 cont'd

- Apply to “any property subject to a zoning application”
  - Encouraging joint or collaborative zoning
  - So long as overall application 1:1, ok
- Residential not required to be built at same time as commercial
  - Lag possible, but get “residential land banks”

# Why Push 1:1?

- Need residential to mitigate (not eliminate) traffic impacts (walk to work/Metro/nightlife)
- Residential can be harder to build (often less ROI)
- See Center for Transit-Oriented Development, p. 8 (<http://www.reconnectingamerica.org/public/show/tod202>) (toughest challenge in already-built out TOD areas is getting residential built).

# 1:1 cont'd

- TBD: hotel, retail, and/or other non-peak uses outside the ratio?
- Issue: should we encourage uses that don't generate peak load traffics (as office does)?
- All make strong neighborhood contributions:
  - Hotel – low impact to infrastructure
  - Retail – Essential to creating dynamic destination
  - Other – museums, arts, other public amenities

# 1:1 cont'd

- Alternatives argued:
  - 2.5:1 SF to keep jobs: *workers* in balance going forward
  - 4:1 SF to “catch up” for current jobs:workers imbalance
- Majority opposes:
  - No precedent
  - Could freeze new development
  - 1:1 SF a floor not ceiling
  - Decide TC and then look to Greater Reston as a whole – maybe more than 1:1 SF

# Resulting FARs

- TBD: 5.0 placeholder
- Let good projects not FAR limits drive decisions
- Ceiling must be high enough to permit realization of TC vision Reston wants
  - Not starting from scratch; profitable commercial space already on the ground
  - Must incent to redevelop to new vision



# Draft Graphic Presentation

- Not part of Comp Plan
- One depiction of themes; others possible
- Final TBD through normal planning processes

# TC Metro North

- Extend urban core to Metro
- Create dynamic, balanced, mixed use destination-origination station
- Platform idea; urban plaza
- Signature retail; restaurants and nightlife; hotel with conference capacity; possibly prominent public amenity
- N-S connectivity

# TC Metro South

- Move from suburban office park to mixed use identity (rezone)
- Unlikely to extend urban core; create its own identity
- Connectivity and open space key challenges
- To reshape must have adequate incentives or will stay commercial

# Town Center North (TCN)

- More urban but not extension of urban core
  - Strong focus on government center (consolidated) and town green
  - Key residential location with supporting retail
  - Bus circulator to tie together
- end -